

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Favorable reconsideration of this application, in view of the present amendment and in light of the following discussion, is respectfully requested.

Claims 1, 4-7, 9, 10, and 14 are pending. In the present amendment, Claims 1, 4-6, 9, 10, and 14 are currently amended and Claims 2, 3, 8, and 11-13 are canceled without prejudice or disclaimer. Support for the present amendment can be found at page 27, lines 15-17 and in canceled Claims 2, 3, and 11-13. Thus, it is respectfully submitted that no new matter is added.

In the outstanding Office Action, Claim 11 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph; Claims 1-7 and 11-13 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over Weihrauch (U.S. Patent No. 5,779,610); Claims 8-10 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over Weihrauch in view of Polzin et al. (U.S. Publication No. 2002/0112810, hereinafter “Polzin”); and Claim 14 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over Weihrauch in view of Yamaguchi (U.S. Publication No. 2003/0213083).

In response to the rejection of Claim 11 under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, it is noted that Claim 11 is canceled by the present amendment. Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that this rejection is moot.

In response to the rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a), Applicants respectfully request reconsideration of these rejections and traverse these rejections, as discussed below.

Amended Claim 1 recites:

A paint roller, comprising:

a liquid-impermeable tubular core member; and

a cover member attached exchangeably on a surface of the core member, and the cover member is a fabric comprising a base which is woven or knitted from at least a thread having a

loop, and the fabric has a pile on an upper surface of the cover member and the loop on an inner surface of the cover member, wherein

the core member is attached to the cover member with an engagement of a separable fastener which comprises a male element and a female element, and a height of the male element is 0.3 to 4.0 mm, and

the male element is present on the surface of the core member, and the female element is present on the inner surface of the cover member.

The paint roller recited in amended Claim 1 includes a liquid-impermeable tubular core member and a cover member exchangeably attached on a surface of the core member. Additionally, the core member is attached to the cover member by a separable fastener which includes a male element on the surface of the core member and a female element on the inner surface of the cover member. Further, the cover member is a woven or knitted fabric having a pile on an upper surface thereof.

Accordingly, when a cover member having the female element thereon is used, paint from the cover member is hardly transferred to the surface of the core member when the cover member is removed. For example, when the used cover member is exchanged in order to paint with a different paint, the core member having the male element does not become dirty with the used paint, and can be cleaned if necessary with a simple washing. On the contrary, when a used cover member having a male element is removed from a core member having the female element, the used paint pooled inside the loop constituting the female element cannot be easily removed from the core member, even if the core member is washed. Therefore, when the used cover member is exchanged, the core member having the female element becomes dirty with the used paint. It is respectfully submitted that the cited references do not disclose or suggest every feature recited in amended Claim 1.

Weihrauch discloses a roll for a paint roller with a bow shaped support member provided with a handle on which the roll can be mounted.¹ In one embodiment, Weihrauch describes a cover part which can be applied radially to a carrying body by means of a Velcro fastener.² Additionally, Weihrauch describes that the cover part can be given a smooth, relatively hard surface or a paint application covering.³

However, it is respectfully submitted that Weihrauch does not disclose or suggest “the cover member is a fabric comprising a base which is woven or knitted from at least a thread having a loop, and the fabric has a pile on an upper surface of the cover member and the loop on an inner surface of the cover member . . . and the male element is present on the surface of the core member, and the female element is present on the inner surface of the cover member,” as recited in amended Claim 1.

Instead, as discussed above, Weihrauch describes that the paint application layer such as the plush layer is fixed to the carrying body surface by means of the Velcro fastener. However, Weihrauch fails to disclose or suggest that the cover member comprises a fabric having a pile or a loop. Instead, the paint application layer of Weihrauch is separate from the Velcro fastener, and thus Weihrauch does not disclose a one piece cover member comprising the fabric having elements of the Velcro therein.

Further, although Weihrauch describes a Velcro fastener as one example of a means of bonding the cover part onto the carrying body, Weihrauch does not disclose or suggest the arrangement of the male element and female element of the Velcro. Additionally, it is noted that Velcro fasteners contain various types of fasteners from soft types such as a fabric to hard types such as a fastener obtained by a melt molding such as a melt extrusion molding (a fastener made of a thermal plastic resin and a basis comprising the same thermal plastic resin

¹ See Weihrauch, at column 1, lines 10-15.

² See Weihrauch, at column 2, lines 47-52.

³ See Weihrauch, at column 2, lines 52-58.

or bonding are attached into one piece like the male element of a core member).

Accordingly, a person of ordinary skill in the art would not understand Weihrauch to disclose or suggest an all-in-one cover member comprising a fabric having the specific arrangement of a male element and female element recited in Claim 1.

Therefore, it is respectfully submitted that Weihrauch does not disclose or suggest every element recited in amended Claim 1. Thus, it is respectfully requested that the outstanding rejection of Claim 1, and all claims dependent thereon, as unpatentable over Weihrauch be withdrawn.

Turning now to the remaining rejections in the Office Action, Applicants respectfully submit that neither of the remaining secondary references (Polzin and Yamaguchi) cure the deficiencies noted above with respect to Weihrauch. Specifically, in the paint rollers described in Polzin and Yamaguchi, the cover member is fixed to the mandrel or the roll core by an adhesive, and the cover member cannot be easily exchanged for a new one. Therefore, for at least the reasons discussed above with respect to Claim 1, it is respectfully submitted that Claims 8-10 and 14 patentably define over all of the cited references. Thus, it is respectfully requested that all outstanding rejections of the claims be withdrawn.

Consequently, in view of the present amendment, no further issues are believed to be outstanding in the present application, and the present application is believed to be in condition for formal allowance. A Notice of Allowance is earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

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